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American Heart Association and The Children's Heart Foundation Announce First Round of CHD Research Award Recipients Grants Total Nearly \$800,000

(Dallas, January 27, 2016) — After expanding their partnership in November 2015 and committing a total of \$22.5 million to Congenital Heart Defect (CHD) research through 2021, the American Heart Association (AHA) and The Children's Heart Foundation (CHF) announced today the first round of recipients of the CHD Research Awards. A total of almost \$800,000 was awarded to seven different research projects from six different states.

"This is an historic moment for The Children's Heart Foundation and the American Heart Association," said William Foley, Executive Director of The Children's Heart Foundation. "The core of our work together is rooted in the CHD Research Awards and, after our organizations committed an additional \$20 million in research funding through 2021, we are proud to announce the first round of grant recipients. This new research will help bring innovative solutions to CHD survival rates and care."

The seven grant recipients are from California, Georgia, Massachusetts, Maryland, Wisconsin and two are from Ohio. Four are women and two have received pre-doctoral grants. Grant recipients are Dr. John Kheir of Boston Children's Hospital; Dr. Chulan Kwon of Johns Hopkins; Dr. John LaDisa of Marquette University; Dr. Lucile Ryckebusch of University of California, San Diego; Ariel Rydeen of Cincinnati Children's Hospital; Juliet Varghese of Ohio State University; and Dr. Mary Wagner of Emory University.

"We are honored to work with The Children's Heart Foundation to advance research focused on congenital heart defects, the most common type of birth defect in the United States," said Nancy Brown, Chief Executive Officer of the American Heart Association. "This is the first of many steps in helping to understand the cause of these defects and, hopefully, in creating medical breakthroughs that will reduce the rate at which they occur."

In 2014, the AHA and the CHF established a set of Congenital Heart Defect Research Awards to fund \$2.5 million in CHD research grants from 2014 through 2016. Last year, the organizations expanded their collaborative funding project, earmarking \$20 million solely devoted to CHD research over the course of five years. The total funding of \$22.5 million will drive research through 2021.

CHDs are among the most common birth defects and the leading killer of infants with birth defects in the U.S. Roughly 40,000 children are born in the U.S with a heart defect each year. The incident rate of CHDs has not decreased over time. However, thanks to advancements made through research, more

infants with CHDs survive to adulthood. Collaborations like the one between the AHA and the CHF are vital to the continuation of these advancements.

Scientists who are conducting research on congenital heart defects to advance knowledge for prevention and treatment are encouraged to submit applications for the second year of funding. For more information about the AHA and CHF research grant awards, including deadline information please visit http://my.americanheart.org/professional/Research/FundingOpportunities/Funding-Opportunities_UCM_316909_SubHomePage.jsp. Additional information about the AHA and the CHF can be found at www.heart.org/congenitalheartdefects and at www.childrensheartfoundation.org.

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About the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association

The American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association are devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – America’s No. 1 and No. 5 killers. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based American Heart Association is the nation’s oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. The American Stroke Association is a division of the American Heart Association. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-800-AHA-USA1, visit heart.org or call any of our offices around the country. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

About The Children’s Heart Foundation

Established by Betsy Peterson in 1996, The Children’s Heart Foundation (CHF) is the country’s leading national organization solely committed to congenital heart research funding. Since 1996, CHF has independently funded 67 research projects with nearly \$8 million. In addition, CHF and the American Heart Association have collaboratively funded seven research projects with nearly \$800,000 through the Congenital Heart Defect Research Awards, bringing CHF's total amount funded to over \$8.4 million. CHF is a national 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization, whose mission is to fund the most promising research to advance the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of congenital heart defects. For more information, please visit: www.childrensheartfoundation.org. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).